

(c) *Written specifications.* The recipient's written specifications must include a clear and accurate description of the technical requirements and the qualitative nature of the material, product or service to be procured.

(1) This description must not contain features which unduly restrict competition, unless the features are necessary to:

- (i) Test or demonstrate a specific thing;
- (ii) Provide for necessary interchangeability of parts and equipment; or
- (iii) Promote innovative technologies.

(2) The recipient must avoid the use of detailed product specifications if at all possible.

(d) *Public notice.* When soliciting bids or proposals, the recipient must allow sufficient time (generally 30 calendar days) between public notice of the proposed project and the deadline for receipt of bids or proposals. The recipient must publish the public notice in professional journals, newspapers, or publications of general circulation over a reasonable area.

(e) *Prequalified lists.* Recipients may use prequalified lists of persons, firms, or products to acquire goods and services. The list must be current and include enough qualified sources to ensure maximum open and free competition. Recipients must not preclude potential bidders from qualifying during the solicitation period.

§ 35.6565 Procurement methods.

The recipient must comply with the requirements for payment to consultants described in 40 CFR 31.36(j). In addition, the recipient must comply with the following requirements:

(a) *Small purchase procedures.* Small purchase procedures are those relatively simple and informal procurement methods for securing services, supplies, or other property that do not cost more than the simplified acquisition threshold in the aggregate. If small purchase procurements are used, the recipient must obtain and document price or rate quotations from an adequate number of qualified sources.

(b) *Sealed bids (formal advertising).* (For a remedial action award contract,

except for Architectural/Engineering services and post-removal site control, the recipient must obtain the award official's approval to use a procurement method other than the sealed bid method.) Bids are publicly solicited and a fixed-price contract (lump sum or unit price) is awarded to the responsible bidder whose bid, conforming with all the material terms and conditions of the invitation for bids, is the lowest in price.

(1) In order for the recipient to use the sealed bid method, the following conditions must be met:

- (i) A complete, adequate, and realistic specification or purchase description is available;
- (ii) Two or more responsible bidders are willing and able to compete effectively for the business; and
- (iii) The procurement lends itself to a fixed-price contract and the selection of the successful bidder can be made principally on the basis of price.

(2) If the recipient uses the sealed bid method, the recipient must comply with the following requirements:

- (i) Publicly advertise the invitation for bids and solicit bids from an adequate number of known suppliers, providing them sufficient time prior to the date set for opening the bids;
- (ii) The invitation for bids, which must include any specifications and pertinent attachments, must define the items or services in order for the bidder to properly respond;
- (iii) Publicly open all bids at the time and place prescribed in the invitation for bids;

(iv) Award the fixed-price contract in writing to the lowest responsive and responsible bidder. Where specified in bidding documents, the recipient shall consider factors such as discounts, transportation cost, and life cycle costs in determining which bid is lowest. The recipient may only use payment discounts to determine the low bid when prior experience indicates that such discounts are usually taken advantage of; and

(v) If there is a sound documented reason, the recipient may reject any or all bids.

(c) *Competitive proposals.* The technique of competitive proposals is normally conducted with more than one

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source submitting an offer, and either a fixed-price or cost-reimbursement type contract is awarded. It is generally used when conditions are not appropriate for the use of sealed bids. If the recipient uses the competitive proposal method, the following requirements apply:

(1) Recipients must publicize requests for proposals and all evaluation factors and must identify their relative importance. The recipient must honor any response to publicized requests for proposals to the maximum extent practical;

(2) Recipients must solicit proposals from an adequate number of qualified sources;

(3) Recipients must have a method for conducting technical evaluations of the proposals received and for selecting awardees;

(4) Recipients must award the contract to the responsible firm whose proposal is most advantageous to the program, with price and other factors considered; and

(5) Recipients may use competitive proposal procedures for qualifications-based procurement of architectural/engineering (A/E) professional services whereby competitor's qualifications are evaluated and the most qualified competitor is selected, subject to negotiation of fair and reasonable compensation. This method, where price is not used as a selection factor, may only be used in the procurement of A/E professional services. The recipient may not use this method to purchase other types of services even though A/E firms are a potential source to perform the proposed effort.

(d) *Noncompetitive proposals.* (1) The recipient may procure by noncompetitive proposals only when the award of a contract is infeasible under small purchase procedures, sealed bids or competitive proposals, and one of the following circumstances applies:

(i) The item is available only from a single source;

(ii) The public exigency or emergency for the requirement will not permit a delay resulting from competitive solicitation (a declaration of an emergency under State law does not necessarily constitute an emergency under the EPA Superfund program's criteria);

(iii) The award official authorized noncompetitive proposals; or

(iv) After solicitation of a number of sources, competition is determined to be inadequate.

(2) When using noncompetitive procurement, the recipient must conduct a cost analysis in accordance with the requirements described in § 35.6585.

§ 35.6570 Use of the same engineer during subsequent phases of response.

(a) If the public notice clearly stated the possibility that the firm or individual selected could be awarded a contract for follow-on services and initial procurement complied with the procurement requirements, the recipient of a CERCLA remedial response Cooperative Agreement may use the engineer procured to conduct any or all of the follow-on engineering activities without going through the public notice and evaluation procedures.

(b) The recipient may also use the same engineer during subsequent phases of the project in the following cases:

(1) Where the recipient conducted the RI, FS, or design activities without EPA assistance but is using CERCLA funds for follow-on activities, the recipient may use the engineer for subsequent work provided the recipient certifies:

(i) That it complied with the procurement requirements in § 35.6565 when it selected the engineer and the code of conduct requirements described in 40 CFR 31.36(b)(3).

(ii) That any CERCLA-funded contract between the engineer and the recipient meets all of the other provisions as described in the procurement requirements in this subpart.

(2) Where EPA conducted the RI, FS, or design activities but the recipient will assume the responsibility for subsequent phases of response under a Cooperative Agreement, the recipient may use, with the award official's approval, EPA's engineer contractor without further public notice or evaluation provided the recipient follows the rest of the procurement requirements to award the contract.